

# Viking Saga

Northwest High School  
Grand Island, Nebraska

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Issue 5



## Winter Ball Masquerade 2013



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# Battle of the dances: Winter Ball versus Homecoming

**Adrian Arroyo**  
STAFF WRITER

Homecoming this year was casual. The theme was neon, the dance was after the homecoming football game. I think that a casual dance is hard to beat, because no one has to worry about buying nice clothes, and they can just be comfortable.

Homecoming was a big change; it was the first year having the dance right after the football game. Winning the game, and then taking the excitement next door to the gym to have an amazing homecoming dance, is a great way to end the night, and a great way to start the year. It was an amazing homecoming.

At Northwest high school, there are three main school dances. Homecoming, Winter Ball, and Prom.

Winter Ball this year was formal and ran by the Vikettes, our school dance team. This year's Winter Ball theme was "masquerade." Everyone was expected to wear a mask. I loved the idea of a masquerade, I think it's fun and it's something different. I also think that it was a fun way to be creative.

When I think about Winter Ball I think mysterious and dark, but yet really shiny clothing. I think that its a good way for every single person to dress up in fun ways. It gives

everyone a chance to be different.

At the end of the night both Homecoming and Winter Ball were really fun. I honestly would pick Winter Ball over Homecoming, however. I love being able to dress nice, and being able to be creative and to be different. This dance definitely gave me the ability to do just that!

I think what I liked the most was the whole theme. It's the theme you see in the movies, the theme used in the fairytales. It made the entire dance far more magical. This dance was not a stereotypical one that Northwest always throws. It was something different but at the same time a really good dance.

I enjoy formal wear, and the aspect of it. Walking into the school and knowing that not one single person looks the same, is pretty awesome. Everyone looks different, and its that type of event where looking different from everyone is okay. I love the lights, the music, the vibe that you get off of other people's energy.

I think that the best part of a school dance is that all the cliques in our school come together for one night, to just have fun, and to dance to loud music.

I loved doing my friend's hair, and going out to eat. I think the best part was being able to dance with all of my friends.



Freshmen Allie Carlini, Preston Sundermeier, and Heather Pohlmeier vowed to keep their grades up while participating in the musical.

## Common Resolutions

- ↪ Stop smoking.
- ↪ Get out of debt.
- ↪ Stop spending so much money.
- ↪ Make a new friend every day.
- ↪ Learn something new every day.
- ↪ Be happier in life.
- ↪ Practice safe driving.
- ↪ Be a better person.

## Honestly; what's the point of a new years resolution?

**Courtney Niemeth**

STAFF WRITER

On January 1st of every year, almost all of us decide that we're going to make a drastic change in our life and call it a "New Years Resolution." People say the new year is a great time to remember our past, but also to really get after our future! It's a time to really reflect on all the decisions we made in the past, decide what we need to change, and then follow through with those changes.

Here's a list of the most common New Year's Resolutions people make: get in shape, quit drinking, quit smoking, get out of debt, be a safer driver, eat healthier, be nicer, get a job, and my personal favorite: be a better

person...

But honestly, why would anyone wait until the first of the year to fix any of those things? It's almost like some people think, "You know, I got in a car accident in July, then again in September; but I'm going to keep texting, speeding, and not wearing my seatbelt until the January 1st!"

Or if anyone was really set on being a better person, and really changing their life, they wouldn't wait until the new year to start being nicer to people. If there's something you know you need to fix to better yourself, why would you wait? Why not just make the change right when you realize it needs to be made?

# Viking Saga

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Outside submissions, suggestions, or letters to the editor are welcome and encouraged. They may be brought to room 32, or emailed to Ms. Kavan at [bkavan@ginw.org](mailto:bkavan@ginw.org). Any and all submissions must be signed for them to be considered for publication, and the editor reserves the right to edit or print any submissions.



## New Year's Resolutions Around Northwest



Principal Tim Krupicka's resolution: "Like most people, I am trying to lose weight, by going on a Vegan Diet. I have two young children; I want to be around for awhile."



Sophomore Meile Rosenlund decided that it would be a good idea to keep up on her piano skills, and practice a lot more.

# Teachers recognize each other's dedication by "Passing the Pooh"

**Melissa Frias**  
STAFF WRITER

Second semester is brand new, and it's been dragging on, hasn't it? Nothing has really changed since first semester, except maybe a couple classmates and teachers. Has anyone noticed any real changes at all? Perhaps a cute stuffed Pooh Bear sitting carelessly in any given classroom? Then, without warning, it disappears just as suddenly as it appeared. Next week comes, then you find that same exact Pooh Bear sitting in another classroom. Has anyone even bothered to ask why it's even there?

This "Passing of the Pooh" is a project created by media specialist George Mohr. He got the idea from reading the book "The Happiness Advantage" by Shawn Achor, which told the story of a company that decided to pass around a stuffed animal to each of its staff members.

But what purpose could passing around a stuffed animal amongst the faculty around the school possibly serve?

The purpose of this project is to give recognition of the hard work staff members who do a lot for the school.

The Pooh has been passed out to staff members every week since the first week of school. A piece of paper comes with the Pooh as a way to ensure that no teacher receives the Pooh twice. The recipient keeps the Pooh sitting in their classroom or office for a week, then they pass the Pooh onto someone new.

"It's a way to draw attention and give recognition to our fellow staff members," Mohr explained.

The first teacher to receive the Pooh was Technology Coordinator Brian Gibson, who graciously took charge of the iPad distribution and maintenance. Gibson felt the instant gratification from the staff members. Gibson decided to pass the Pooh onto Health Services



*Head custodian Mike Fitzgerald is the latest recipient of the Pooh award for recognition of the many things he does for the staff and students at Northwest.*

PHOTO BY MELISSA FRIAS

teacher Denise McNeil. The main reason he chose McNeil was because she was one of the main contributors in handing out iPads to students.

"It's a nice thing to have staff members appreciating each other," Gibson noted.

Science teacher Jennifer Verba was a recipient of the Pooh a couple of weeks ago. She believes the point of the Pooh is to acknowledge staff members on some of the things they have done for each other as well as for their students.

"I think the passing of the Pooh is a subtle way for staff members to recognize each other. Some people have been awarded the Pooh for hard work, big accomplishments, spending extra time with students, or cheerful attitudes," Verba commented.

Verba chose superintendent Matt Fisher to receive the Pooh the following week, even though she personally wanted to award it to the whole staff for allowing her to feel welcome during her first year at a brand new school.

Fisher personally feels that this is a great idea to help staff members appreciate one another.

"I feel this is a great means for telling people, 'Nice Job'.

Everyone likes to have their efforts appreciated and it is extra special when it comes from the people you are working with. Thank you Mr. Mohr for giving us Pooh!" Fisher commented.

The recent recipient of The Pooh was head custodian Mike Fitzgerald. He was awarded the Pooh for his hard work in maintaining the cleanliness of the school.

"Mike does an outstanding job directing the custodial staff and overseeing the maintenance of our buildings and our vehicles. Not only does he take care of the day to day demands, but his forward thinking helps to outline how he will address future needs," Fisher explained his reason for choosing Fitzgerald.

"I felt very appreciated by it. I think the Pooh is good because it recognizes people for the job they do," Fitzgerald noted.

The passing of the Pooh has given into perspective that a school is much like an organism: every part of it contributes to the well being of the whole.

Fitzgerald has decided to keep who he has chosen as the next recipient a secret. Keep your eyes open: no one knows who will be the next to get the Pooh.

# Northwest draws prospective students in with 8th Grade Orientation night

**Amy Johnson**  
STAFF WRITER

"Beware of the future freshmen!" Most people would normally think this about the 8th graders who will become the future freshmen of our school. But is that really the case?

Every grade can be worried or stressed about the incoming students. That could be because they are either new and don't know the ways of the school, or new students will just add to the crowds. But everyone should look at this as an opportunity to become good role models and show the newcomers how things are done.

What is 8th grade orientation? Well, it's as simple as 1, 2, 3. It's the time nearing the end of the school year when middle schoolers and their parents go to public schools and are given introductions to the school, as well as a much needed tour of the classes.

So why is orientation so important?

"It is really important because over half of the school's students are option enrollment," curriculum coordinator Jeanette Ramsey said. "It's also a great opportunity to showcase the school and to let parents, students and incoming freshmen be aware of our academic

and extracurricular programs, along with over 40 clubs, giving everyone an opportunity to get involved."

Some students may think that this orientation is not really special or important, but it really is vital to the school.

"We are expecting around 150 to 200 students to show for orientation," Ramsey said, so it is vital for these orientations to happen.

And why is it important to go to orientation?

"It will make the students feel more comfortable when they start," Ramsey said.

Many people are scheduling, planning and organizing for incoming visitors on January 31 and making sure that there are students who are willing to help out. With the right people, this is able to be a great success and a chance to obtain new students.

And what do students have to say about the upcoming orientation?

Well freshmen think it will be great, not being the new kids, while the other students tend to think negatively about losing their senior friends.

But even when old friends leave, you can make new ones. And we all should help make the incoming freshmen feel welcome.



Junior Hanna Yelkin escorts senior Morgan Mallory across the gym floor during the coronation at Winter Ball.



Senior Jessica Saddler dances within a group of friends at the Winter Ball dance.

## Jessica Saddler

Jessica is the daughter of Mike and Sonia Saddler. She is involved in cross country, soccer, 14 Karat Gold, Bible club, and National Honor Society. After graduation, Jessica plans to participate in a Denver program called "YOUTH WITH A MISSION."

Someday she would like to help at an orphanage in a foreign country.

## Kaley Werner

Kaley is the daughter to Kevin and Koleen Werner. Kaley's activities include volleyball, basketball, track, and National Honor Society. After high school she plans to attend a four year college and major in Exercise Science.

## Brianna Vitera

Brianna is the daughter of Dave and Deb Vitera. Brianna is involved in Vikettes, 14 Karat Gold, musical, and National Honor Society. Her plans after graduation include going to UNO, attending medical school, becoming a dermatologist, and starting a family.



A Vikette parent helps set up the gym before the dance.



Junior Daniel Arreaga shows off his moves to the song "Cancan Style."



Seniors Brianna Vitera, Kaley Warner, and Jessica Saddler receive their crowns for being rated Winter Ball Royalty.

# Winter

## Morgan Mallory

Morgan is the daughter of Brian and Stacy Kelly. Morgan is involved in volleyball, 14 Karat Gold, musical, and National Honor Society. She plans to go to college to become an occupational therapist or a speech pathologist. She would also like to open her own photography studio as a hobby or even a part-time job.



Seniors Morgan Mallory and Alex Larsen converse at the Winter Ball.



Sophomore Adalyn Wedge smiles as she dances with her friends at the night of the Masquerade Ball.



Junior Hanna Yelkin and Alex Larsen converse at the Winter Ball to be a success.

## Vikettes work to make Winter Ball a successful night

**Mary Rice**  
STAFF WRITER

Winter Ball; a time where girls worry about how much time in advance they should get the best dress, then of course, boys worry about finding the perfect date. They then spend more time trying to figure out the best way to ask them. After getting their date, they have to worry about what kind of flowers to give their date, find a good matching tie; the girls worry about finding the perfect pair of shoes to go with the dress and having the "cutest" hairstyles.

Finally, all of these neverending tasks are considered to be hard work in the opinion of most high school girls and boys. Although, when they arrive at the dance it never occurs to them the time, hard work, and effort that is put into the preparation of the dance.

This year's Winter Ball was hosted by the

Northwest Vikettes. While speaking with junior Hannah Yelkin, she stated that, "We try to make it a good dance." Yelkin said that the team took a lot of their own time to prepare the Masquerade Ball this year.

Before they continue planning, they are required to make sure they get the school's approval on the DJ, the date of the dance, and the theme; "The Masquerade Ball." Yelkin also said they took a lot of time creating 20 life size masks for the gym.

The parents of the Vikettes put in their time and effort also. They all came in the day of Winter Ball and assisted the girls with decorating the gym and main hallway.

A lot of time, hard work, and effort went into Winter Ball; the members of the dance team took out a lot of their personal time to make sure the dance would be a success. The girls strived to make everyone's night one to remember.

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# Ball 2013



## Alex Larsen

Alex is the son of Kevin and Anita Larsen. He is involved in football, basketball, soccer, and National Honor Society. Alex's plans for after graduation include attending a four year college and to study a lot.



A group of freshman girls dance together song after song throughout the night.



After being announced Winter Ball King, senior Alex Larsen receives his crown and sash.



Juniors Candi Minx and Katie Aguilar dance with their dates during the Winter Ball Masquerade.



The Winter Ball candidates patiently wait for the king and queen to be announced.

## Kyle Bockmann

Kyle is the son of Jay and Stephanie Bockmann. He is involved in football, basketball, soccer, and National Honor Society. After graduation, Kyle plans to attend college to study Ag Business and Engineering.

## Zach Rouzee

Zach is the son of Dave and Diane Rouzee; he is involved in football, basketball, golf, and National Honor Society. He plans on going to a four year college to major in Business after he graduates.

## Alec Waters

Alec is the son of Chris and Cori Waters. Alec participates in football, basketball, track, and National Honor Society. His plans for after he graduates includes attending UNL.



Sophomore Mikaylah Rieken, Alyssa Retzlaff, and Caitlin Bartz dance with their dates during a slow song.



Sophomore Erika Sudder reads the bios of the royalty members during the coronation.

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# Girls basketball having a hot season

**Seth Salter**  
STAFF WRITER

Before the tip-off of the girls basketball season, everyone was ecstatic about the season with the girls coming off fresh from a Class B State Championship in volleyball. Everyone was anxious to see if they could keep the ball rolling on the basketball court.

Nevertheless, no one really knew how the season would play out, with new faces, including a new head coach, and assistant coach.

But after a booming 15-1 start, the lady Vikings streaked on a 13-game win streak. The girls are currently ranked 4th in Class B, and have moved their way around the top of class rankings.

The Vikings have been soaring under the wing of junior McKenzie Brown, who's once again among the Class B leaders in scoring. Brown

has tore up the court this year in both volleyball and basketball, quickly emerging as a star as well as a leader on the court.

Also, Brown broke the single game scoring record, 35 points against Schuyler, and became the first Northwest player to score 1,000 points in her career. Brown told the Grand Island Independent, "I think it means a lot because it's a team thing."

"They're the ones who make the passes so I can score, so I think it just means a lot to everyone."

The Vikings went into the Conference tournament with a full head of steam, outscoring their last three opponents by a score of 176 to 66. In this three game span numerous records had fallen, including a school record 92 points against Schuyler. In Conference play, the girls dispatched Central City 62-14, but fell to Crete in an overtime game of 63-71.



Junior Katie Placke drives to the hoop in a 54-30 win over Columbus.

PHOTO BY FILIP POREBA



Junior Darrek McNelis looks towards the basket in Northwest boys basketball game against York.

PHOTO BY FILIP POREBA

## Team motto guides boys basketball team to success

**Ashley Bykirk**  
STAFF WRITER

A combination of Trust, Toughness, and Togetherness have guided the boys basketball team to experience much success this season.

"Having a team motto allows the team to focus on something," stated boys basketball head coach Ryan Rathke.

Not all basketball seasons have a team motto; however during the off season, Coach Rathke, along with the input of some team parents, came up with two team mottos to represent the boys basketball team and season.

The first motto "Trust, Toughness, and Togetherness" was chosen as Rathke felt the 3-T's were important to have as a team that is able to play at a high level.

The second motto, "All Out, All Game, All Season" signifies effort in playing the game, which is always

important, noted Rathke.

The team motto is incorporated into the season by being visible in the locker room on personal lockers and walls. The motto is talked about amongst the team quite a bit, as well.

Rathke definitely believes that the motto represents the team well and encourages the team to be successful.

"Early in the year, we didn't have quite the trust we needed, but as the season is unfolding, we are growing in the 3-T's, and it is showing in how we are playing," said Rathke.

To date, the Northwest boys basketball team holds a

record of 12-1 and is ranked sixth in Class B, according to the Omaha World-Herald.

In addition to guidance by strong and meaningful team mottos, Rathke believes the senior leadership on the team along with the strong discipline within the athletes contributes to the success of the season so far.

As the season continues on, Rathke is still holding high standards and goals for his team.

"I'm looking to become even more of a disciplined team and I'm also looking for a hunger to get even better yet from our players," said Rathke.

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# The Walking Dead Game reviewed!



via gamesradar.com

**Kyle Janecek**  
STAFF WRITER

About every person who is alive right now is probably aware that *The Walking Dead* is a fairly popular TV show about the zombie apocalypse. However, a significantly smaller portion of the human population is probably aware that *The Walking Dead* is also an episodic game for PC and iPad, telling the story of a completely new group of zombie apocalypse survivors. It's my mission as of now to get people playing it, because *The Walking Dead* is a very good game.

Strangely enough, the game takes the form of a point and click adventure. This is an unexpected move for a zombie apocalypse game, but it pulls it off extremely well, with the focus shifting from "just shoot things" to actually interacting

with your fellow apocalypse survivors and forming relationships with them as well. This makes little decisions in conversation seem to have a decent amount of impact on the game... or not in some cases, but the catch is that you can never tell which kind of decision is which until after you've seen the results.

Other pluses of the game include a very different art style, and some great character development. Some characters you will instantly love, some characters you will always hate, and some have that very hard-to-nail quality of starting off as a character you can't help but dislike and then develops to the point of them being your favorite.

Slight drawbacks of the game include the usual generic qualities of the story, though it's not really their fault I suppose, that just happens

when you choose the zombie apocalypse as your story template. Though this lead to another problem I had. This problem was that I had just burned myself out of the game and it got really boring, but I suppose that would happen with any game if you spend too much time with it. Still, for a game that seems to have a lot of replay value it doesn't have as much as you might think in reality.

Overall, *The Walking Dead* tells a great story, arguably better than that of the apparently average TV show. It may have some flaws, but that doesn't take much away from the experience at the end of the day. Play through it once or twice, but don't burn yourself out or you may find that it dies, as it did for me. Then starts walking around again and eating things... as it did for me.

Derome the Twisted stickfigure in.....  
"Les Misérablah-blah-blah!"



By: Tyler Clement

This new movie is AWFUL! All right, that's it, I'm going to go see The Hobbit.

# Award-winning stage play hits the big screen

**Makena Kelly**  
STAFF WRITER

After over thirty years of being a theatrical production, *Les Misérables* premiered on the big screen Christmas Day of 2012. The film had its audience, and critics alike, in awe over the stunning cinematography, and prestigious acting displayed throughout the film. Many well-known actors portrayed the memorable roles of characters very familiar to frequent theatre-goers.

On January 9, Oscar award nominations were announced. *Les Mis* racked in nine nominations, close behind to the leader, *Lincoln*, with twelve. These nominations included: Hugh Jackman for Best Actor, Anne Hathaway for

Best Supporting Actress, and overall Best Picture.

Northwest students were certainly not left out of the hoopla. After Christmas the hallways were buzzing with talk about the film.

"I thought it was truly the most amazing film yet. They made a Broadway show applicable to our society as a whole," stated junior Dalton Stout.

Most Northwest students wouldn't disagree.

*Les Misérables* is a production known around the world, and the film proves to be an extremely accurate portrayal. The 85th Academy Awards are on Sunday, February 24. Be sure to watch and find out if *Les Mis* won the hearts of The Academy like it did our own.

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